

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
STATE OF MONTANA

1719898 - R8 SDMS

STEVE BULLOCK  
GOVERNOR



ANGELA MCLEAN  
LT. GOVERNOR

September 21, 2015

Shaun McGrath  
Regional Administrator  
US Environmental Protection Agency Region 8  
1595 Wynkoop Street  
Denver, CO 80202-1129

**RE: Smurfit-Stone Frenchtown Mill Site and Proposed NPL Listing**

Dear Mr. McGrath:

I write to encourage the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to list the former Smurfit-Stone Frenchtown Mill site on the National Priorities List (NPL) as soon as practicable in the fall of 2015 or spring of 2016.

The Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) appreciates the efforts taken by the EPA over the last year to further characterize the site, as well as engage the Potential Responsible Parties (PRPs) to conduct site cleanup. The agencies' efforts of the past year, however, have unfortunately not led to the finalization of an Administrative Order on Consent (AOC) with the PRPs to conduct further investigations of the industrial, agricultural, floodplain and the Clark Fork River areas impacted by decades of paper mill operations. As I am sure you are aware, the cleanup of this site has local community support. DEQ encourages EPA to take this opportunity to move this site closer to cleanup by listing it on the NPL. Additionally, DEQ encourages EPA to continue site characterization efforts by using your authority to proceed with site investigation this fall.

Although some site investigation has been accomplished, much more needs to be done to fully characterize this site to ensure a cleanup that is protective of human health and the environment. In particular, sufficient characterization of the river and floodplain must be done to ensure long-term protections to the Clark Fork River, one of Montana's iconic water courses. Listing the site on the NPL is the next appropriate step to address the contaminants, including dioxins, at this site.

As always, the DEQ will provide assistance and full cooperation with EPA as it moves through the listing process, site characterization, development of cleanup plans, and the cleanup itself. The State of Montana will continue to work with EPA to meet our common goals of protection of human health and the environment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Bullock", written over a horizontal line.

STEVE BULLOCK  
Governor

CC: Director Tom Livers  
Commissioner Stacy Rye  
Commissioner Nicole Rowley  
Commissioner Jean Curtis  
Vickie Zeier, Missoula County Chief Administrative Officer  
Debra Thomas, EPA Region 8 Deputy Regional Administrator  
Deputy Director Joe Vranka  
Martin Hestmark, Assistant Region Administrator  
Bill Murray, Superfund Remedial Program Director  
Director James Woolford